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REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, QUESTIONS RELATING TO REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS

Letter dated 1 December 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 29 November 1995, addressed to you by H.E. Mr. Osman Ertuğ, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 109.

(Signed) Hüseyin E. ÇELEM
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Letter dated 29 November 1995 from Mr. Osman Ertuğ
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to the statement made by the Greek Cypriot delegate at the 22nd meeting of the Third Committee held on 9 November 1995, under agenda item 109 (Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; Questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions). (See A/C.3/50/SR.22.) This statement contains allegations that are totally unfounded and contrary to the realities of Cyprus. In view of the absence of any Turkish Cypriot delegate at the said meeting, owing to the usurpation and continued monopolization of the title of "Government of Cyprus" by the Greek Cypriot side since 1963, I am compelled to respond to these allegations in writing in order to set the record straight.

In his statement, the Greek Cypriot delegate attempts to absolve the Greek Cypriot side of its sole responsibility for the existing division of the island, by describing the legitimate military presence of a guarantor Power, Turkey, as an "occupation". In fact, the only occupation in Cyprus is the 32-year-old usurpation and occupation of the seat of Government of the then bicommunal Republic of Cyprus by the Greek Cypriot side.

After 11 years of systematic ethnic cleansing directed by the Greek Cypriots against their former Turkish Cypriot partners, the Greek coup d'état in 1974 had brought the union of Cyprus with Greece (ENOSIS) within immediate reach. The "Greek invasion of Cyprus", as it was described by the Greek Cypriot side's own leader, Archbishop Makarios, in his speech before the Security Council on 19 July 1974 (see S/PV.1780), was thwarted by the timely intervention of Turkey, which was in accordance with the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee. Turkey's intervention brought an end to the systematic human rights violations by the Greek Cypriots and saved the Turkish Cypriots from total annihilation at the hands of the joint Greek and Greek Cypriot forces, which were poised to overrun the Turkish Cypriot areas and carry out their final extermination plans.

The 11-year-long ethnic cleansing campaign of the Greek Cypriots, culminating in the coup d'état of 15 July 1974, produced around 30,000 Turkish Cypriot refugees, one quarter of the entire Turkish Cypriot population at the time. This is what the assessment of the Secretary-General was about the plight of the Turkish Cypriot community in that tragic period, as stated in his report to the Security Council of 10 September 1964 (S/5950, para. 190):

> "In addition to losses incurred in agriculture and in industry during the first part of the year, the Turkish community had lost other sources of its income including the salaries of over 4,000 persons who were employed by the Cyprus Government and by public private concerns located in the Greek Cypriot Zones. The trade of the Turkish community had considerably declined during the period due to the existing situation, and unemployment reached a very high level as approximately 25,000 Turkish Cypriots had become refugees. Expenditure of the Turkish Communal Chamber on development and other prospects, as well as other expenditure had dropped

considerably as a yearly subsidy formerly received from the Government had ceased to be granted in 1964. Furthermore, a large part of its remaining resources had to be used for unemployment relief and other forms of compensation as approximately half of the population came to be on relief. In accordance with figures published by the Turkish Cypriot Communal Chamber, the number of persons receiving some kind of assistance from the Red Crescent relief amounted to about 56,000, including 25,000 displaced persons, 23,500 unemployed and 7,500 dependants of missing persons, disabled and others."

During the events of 1974 triggered by the coup, 65,000 more Turkish Cypriots were displaced and sought refuge in the safety of the North. It was only then that the Greek Cypriots also became a party to the displaced persons problem that had afflicted the Turkish Cypriot community for 11 years. This was the inevitable result of their own endeavours, and those of Greece, to take over and turn Cyprus into a Greek colony.

However, the question of displaced persons has been fundamentally settled between the two sides through the agreement on the exchange of populations reached between the two sides at the third round of the intercommunal talks held in Vienna between 31 July and 2 August 1975, whereby the two sides agreed on a voluntary regrouping of populations, each in its own respective territory, the Turkish Cypriots in the North and the Greek Cypriots in the South (see S/11789, dated 5 August 1975). The implementation of this agreement, which paved the way for a bizonal, bicommunal federal settlement of the Cyprus question, was carried out with the help of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) (see S/11789/Add.1, dated 10 September 1975). The displaced persons on both sides have since been resettled and rehabilitated, each side tackling its own problem in this regard within its own territory.

In view of the foregoing, it appears that the persistence of the Greek Cypriot allegations on this matter is the result of their refusal to accept that the matter has been settled, lest they be deprived of another means of generating political propaganda. I wish to remind the Greek Cypriot side, once more, that any and all issues pertaining to the Cyprus question should be discussed at the intercommunal talks and not be turned into a tool for political posturing. The Greek Cypriot side should realize that, while playing the role of the victim in Cyprus (although it is the Turkish Cypriots whose human rights have been and continue to be violated) may have paid them some dividends, this is a short-sighted policy and that the solution of the Cyprus question lies at the negotiating table.

I should be grateful if this present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 109.

(Signed) Osman ERTUĞ
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus